



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY  
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

# LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY AT THE GEF

Land is a complex mixture of soil, water and biodiversity. Working together, these three elements create goods and services that provide a foundation for sustainable livelihoods and peaceful co-existence between peoples. Yet land degradation — the loss in biological or economic productive capacity of the land — is putting the health, livelihoods and security of an estimated 1.5 billion people at risk.

The international community is working to halt and reverse land degradation, restore degraded ecosystems and sustainably manage our resources through a commitment to land degradation neutrality (LDN). LDN is defined as “a state whereby the amount of healthy and productive land resources necessary to support ecosystem services, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales”<sup>1</sup> — and has become a key organizing principle of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The GEF has positively responded to the invitation from the UNCCD COP12 in Ankara to consider technical and financing support related to LDN. This leaflet summarizes the different projects financed since then.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Intergovernmental Working Group definition (1 June 2015)

## In the past two years, the GEF has supported the following activities:

- Voluntary LDN target setting;
- Reinforcing capacities for LDN;
- Monitoring LDN;
- Catalyzing the role of the private sector; and
- Implementing sustainable land management (SLM) and land restoration activities.

## This leaflet summarizes LDN support under GEF6:

- 16 projects investing approximately \$60 million of GEF grant resources that address LDN;
- 60 countries supported in voluntary LDN target setting through an Enabling Activity project;
- 13 countries supported in LDN implementation and activities on the ground;
- 5 global/regional projects to develop capacities and tools, including on LDN;
- 8 GEF agencies are involved with AfDB, CI, FAO, IADB, IUCN, UN Environment, UNDP, and the World Bank.



## Voluntary LDN target setting

- The LDN target setting project helps 60 beneficiary countries identify the LDN baseline and define national LDN targets. This project will provide empirical evidence of the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of LDN. The project is cofinanced by the GEF and the governments of Turkey, Trinidad & Tobago, and Luxemburg.

## Reinforcing capacities for LDN

- The GEF helps GEF Eligible Parties align their National Action Programs and prepare the bi-annual report to the UNCCD.
- A Global Support Programme completes these enabling activities and adds more capacity building and knowledge management to facilitate decision-making processes.
- Benin benefitted from a Cross-Cutting Capacity Development project to better implement the Rio Conventions, other MEAs, and SDGs.

## Monitoring LDN

- A Global project provides a toolbox for assessing and monitoring status and trends in land degradation at multiple scales using global data sources. Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda are the four participating pilot countries.
- A Regional project will generate LDN knowledge and science based on analysis of the SLM portfolio in a number of countries within the Great Green Wall Initiative.

## Catalyzing the role of the private sector

- IADB has developed a Risk Mitigation Instrument under the GEF6 Non-Grant Instrument to finance a series of land restoration and integrated natural resources management investments.

## Implementing SLM and land restoration activities

- Turkey has developed a phased project to strengthen the enabling environment for LDN, improve multi-sectoral land-use planning processes, and pilot LDN activities. The pilot site is the Sakarya Basin in northwestern Turkey.
- Lebanon has developed a project to achieve LDN in the country's mountainous landscapes. The project is revising existing policies and programs and rehabilitating lands in pilot sites.
- Projects in Albania, Chad, Dominica, Georgia, Mali, Ghana, and the regional project in Jordan and Egypt include specific components or activities that address the implementation of LDN.
- The GEF Small Grants Program in Ecuador and Costa Rica will improve the role of Civil Society Organizations in implementing LDN.



## GEF6 LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY PROJECT PORTFOLIO

(July 2014–July 2017)

- **Albania:** *Promoting Sustainable Land Management through Integrated Restoration of Ecosystems* (GEF \$963,242; cofinancing \$9.67 million, UNEP, GEFID #9477, PIF approved)
- **Benin:** *Building Core Capacity for Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Relevant Sustainable Development Goals* (GEF \$1.3 million, UNEP, GEFID: 9809, PIF approved)
- **Chad:** *Restoring Ecological Corridors in Western Chad for Multiple Land and Forests Benefits—RECONNECT* (GEF \$6 million; cofinancing \$24,504,587, IUCN, GEF ID #9417, PIF approved)
- **Dominica,** *Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica* (GEF \$2 million; cofinancing \$14.7 million, UNEP, GEFID #9667, PIF approved)
- **Georgia,** *Generating Economic and Environmental Benefits from Sustainable Land Management for Vulnerable Rural Communities of Georgia* (GEF \$1.6 million; cofinancing \$4.5 million, UNEP, GEFID #9730, PIF approved)
- **Ghana:** *Sustainable Land and Water Management Project* (GEF \$13.9 million; cofinancing \$34.7 million, World Bank, GEFID #9340, CEO endorsed)
- **Global:** *The LDN target setting project* (GEF \$3 million; cofinancing \$2.9 million, IUCN, GEFID 9365, PIF approved)
- **Global:** *The Global Support Programme II: Strengthening UNCCD reporting—enhancing implementation of the UNCCD* (GEF \$2.2 million; cofinancing \$1.9 million, UNEP, under preparation)
- **Global:** *The Support to GEF Eligible Parties for Alignment of National Action Programs and Reporting Process under UNCCD* (GEF \$1.8 million; UNEP, under preparation)
- **Global:** *Enabling the use of Global Data Sources to assess and Monitor Land Degradation at Multiple Scales* (GEF \$2 million; cofinancing \$10 million, Conservation International, GEFID 9163, CEO approved)
- **Jordan & Egypt,** *Sustainable Rangeland Management for Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Change Mitigation* (GEF \$4 million; cofinancing \$12.6 million, UNEP, GEF ID 9407, PIF approved)
- **Lebanon:** *Land Degradation Neutrality of Mountain Landscapes in Lebanon* (GEF \$4.6 million; cofinancing \$17.2 million GEF, UNDP, GEF ID #9388, PIF approved)
- **Mali:** *Scaling up a multiple benefits approach to enhance resilience in agro- and forest landscapes of Mali's Sahel regions* (Kayes, Koulikoro and Ségou), (GEF \$9.5 million; cofinancing \$60.2 million, AfDB, GEFID #9293, PIF approved)
- **Regional:** *Improving the use of science for large-scale assessment of investments and scaling up of Sustainable Land Management in the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative region:* (GEF \$1.2 million; co-financing \$6 million, UNEP, PIF approved)
- **Regional:** *Risk Mitigation Instrument for Land Restoration* (Non-Grant, GEF \$16.3 million; cofinancing \$120 million from the private sector, IADB, GEFID 9277, CEO endorsed)
- **Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program:** Ecuador (GEF \$1.8 million; Cofinancing \$4.1 million, UNDP, GEF ID 9460, CEO approved), Costa Rica (GEF \$2.3 million; cofinancing \$3.1 million, UNDP, GEFID 9088, CEO endorsed)
- **Turkey:** *Contributing to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Target Setting by Demonstrating the LDN Approach in the Upper Sakarya Basin for Scaling up at National Level* (GEF \$2.7 million; cofinancing \$14.6 million, FAO, GEFID 9586, PIF approved)

